

BIBLE LIFE MESSAGES

How Can You Be Holy on the Job?

I Peter 2:18-25

¹ How can you be holy on the job? Our scripture today from First Peter, chapter 2, verses 18 through 25, can give us the answer. ²

Slaves, submit yourselves to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and considerate, but also to those who are harsh. For it is commendable if a man bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because he is conscious of God. But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. “He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.” ¹ ³

When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges

¹ v18-22.

justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. For you were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls. ² ₄

Remember First Peter, chapter 1, verses 15 and 16? But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy." Part of your calling to be a Christian is to live a holy life on the job. So how do you do that?

Notice how the Lord responded to His situation. ₅

² v23-25.

I. The Lord Worked in an Unfriendly Workplace - v21-23

The Lord worked in an unfriendly workplace. Verses 21 through 23 read, **To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. “He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.” When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.** ⁶

The Lord did not deserve the treatment that He received. ⁷ The word "suffer" ³ in this passage means to be acted upon, to experience pain. What pain did the Lord suffer? ⁸

³ πάσχω.

Verse 23 tells us that He endured insults ⁴ but He didn't retaliate. When He was hanging from the cross in horrible pain he was mocked by His enemies. ⁹ They ridiculed Him with, "Save Yourself if you're the Son of God!" "Come down from the cross and we'll believe you!" "He trusts God, let God deliver Him!" ⁵ ₁₀

Luke 22 continues, They blindfolded him and demanded, "Prophecy! Who hit you?" And they said many other insulting things to him. ⁶ ₁₁

Not only did He endure insults; verse 24 tells us that in the act of dying on the cross He also bore our sins. ⁷ ₁₂ This was in fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy, Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our

⁴ v23 - When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.

⁵ Matthew 27:39-44.

⁶ Luke 22:64-65.

⁷ v24 - He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.

transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. ⁸ ¹³ John the Baptist paraphrased this prophecy when he said, **Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!** ⁹

So, ¹⁴ How did the Lord respond to all of this? ¹⁵ In verses 22 and 23 He committed no sin! ¹⁰ ¹⁶ Second Corinthians, chapter 5, verse 21, **God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.** ¹⁷ Hebrews, chapter 4, verse 15 puts it this way, **For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are — yet was without sin.**

⁸ Isaiah 53:4-5.

⁹ John 1:29.

¹⁰ v22-23 - “He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.” When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.

¹⁸ In verse 23 ¹¹ He entrusted Himself to God. From the cross Jesus called out with a loud voice, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.” When he had said this, he breathed his last. ¹²

What an example for us! If Lord Jesus responded the way He did in an unfriendly workplace . . . ¹⁹

II. How Do You Respond to an Unfriendly Workplace? - v18-20 & 24-25

. . . how do you respond to an unfriendly workplace? ²⁰ He wants you to imitate His example. Verse 21, . . . leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. ²¹ The word "follow", here ¹³ means to walk behind on a trail.

¹¹ v22-23 - “He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.” When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.

¹² Luke 23:46.

¹³ ἐπακολουθέω.

One summer when I was on a military assignment in Germany I took our family on a Christian retreat located in the Italian Alps. During that week I joined a group of European Christians for a hike along the ridge of a mountain. At one point during the afternoon each side of our path extended only a couple of feet before dropping off on both sides for several hundred feet. I learned quickly the reason for hiking single file and relatively close to the person in front of me. I did exactly what that experienced European hiker in front of me did.

Lord Jesus wants you to follow in His steps the same way! Your path (workplace) may be as dangerous spiritually as that trail I took in Italy was physically!

What did the Lord not do? ²² He didn't retaliate. When someone is unfair to you in some way, respond to them the way Jesus did when He was mistreated. ²³ To really be Christ-like, you need to be with Him and imitate His ways! ²⁴

But what do you do when your boss is a ding-a-ling?
Notice verse 18, ²⁵ **Slaves, submit yourselves to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and considerate, but also to those who are harsh.** You submit to their authority anyway! It takes the power of the Holy Spirit in your life to respond this way; but do it! ²⁶

But what happens when you suffer for doing good? ²⁷
Verses 19 and 20 help, **For it is commendable if a man bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because he is conscious of God. But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God.** ²⁸

The word "endure" ¹⁴ here means to willingly stay under your circumstances. ²⁹ The word

¹⁴ ὑπομένω.

"commendable" ¹⁵ means gracious. It's the same word for God's grace towards us.

The Europeans tell the story of two goats on a narrow path in the mountains of Switzerland. They come face to face to one another with not enough space on the trail to pass. Looks like a stalemate doesn't it? Not so. One goat slinks to the ground and the other goat crawls over it. They, then, continue on their separate directions. Act with grace when enduring unjust suffering! ³⁰

Peter, himself, became an example of this! He was flogged (whipped) just for sharing the Lord with his accusers. He and the other apostles simply rejoiced that they were able to suffer disgrace for representing the Lord in their "unfriendly" workplace! ¹⁶ ₃₁

Colossians, chapter 3, verses 23 and 24 read, **Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as**

¹⁵ χάρις.

¹⁶ Acts 5:40-41.

working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

Having this attitude you will be the shining light where you're employed. Be holy on the job!

<http://www.biblelifemesages.org>